

CONFIDENTIAL

 CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY USSR

SUBJECT Observations and Conversations

DATE (OF INFO.) Dec 53 - Jan 54

DATE DISTR. 9 APR 54

NO. OF PAGES 3

NO. OF ENCLS.

SUPP. TO
REPORT NO.

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECTING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE
 OF THE UNITED STATES, WITHIN THE MEANING OF TITLE 18, SECTIONS 793
 AND 794, OF THE U.S. CODE, AS AMENDED. ITS TRANSMISSION OR REVE-
 LATION OF ITS CONTENTS TO OR RECEIPT BY AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON IS
 PROHIBITED BY LAW. THE PENALTY FOR VIOLATION OF THIS PROVISION IS

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. We felt that our interpreters gave faithful interpretations during our many conversations with the Soviets. One of our group knew a little Russian and could follow the translations enough to check them. [redacted] /Phonetic spelling, last name not recalled. [redacted] gives last name [redacted] was the younger of our two interpreters and the more broadminded. He, upon occasion, reminded the Soviet people we were talking to that we also had a point or two. The following are some of the topics we touched upon in our conversations.
2. Education: The teachers at the Palace of Pioneers in Tbilisi asked us: [redacted] Is it compulsory? How many years are required? Do students have an opportunity for summer vacations?
3. Scholarships: Students at the University of Kharkov asked us about scholarships [redacted] At the Baku Oil College, we were asked if workers' children could go to college [redacted]
4. Books: We met a post-graduate student doing work in Western European languages at Stalin University in Tbilisi who likes Shakespeare, Galsworthy, Twain, Longfellow; he did not like Shaw. Others we talked to there liked O'Henry, Faulkner and Howard Fast. We had our best conversation on literature with the youth-paper editors who boasted that there is no illiteracy in the USSR. They particularly liked Fast (The Spartans, Thirty Pieces of Silver, Freedom Road) and Dreiser. The students at the Middle School in Kiev liked Jack London, Kipling, Verne.
5. Press: We were asked many questions [redacted]

 CONFIDENTIAL

DISTRIBUTION	STATE	EV	ARMY	NAVY	AIR	FBI			
--------------	-------	----	------	------	-----	-----	--	--	--

This report is for the use within the USA of the Intelligence components of the Departments or Agencies indicated above. It is not to be transmitted overseas without the concurrence of the originating office through the Assistant Director of the Office of Collection and Dissemination, CIA.

CONFIDENTIAL

- 3 -

25X1

25X1

20. Beria: We never saw a picture of Beria anywhere-even in his home town of Tbilisi; although we did occasionally see places where the picture has apparently hung. In the Park of Culture and Rest at Tbilisi, I visited the funicular railroad station which I had read, before reaching the USSR, had been designed by Beria's sister. While at the station, I asked if this was true and was told that it was definitely not true. I noticed that both Stalin's and another's picture, probably Beria's, had been removed from the building facade. During a series of toasts with the editors of the youth papers in Tbilisi, I proposed a toast to Justice. I felt the Soviets understood my reference but they had to join me since I had joined them in their toasts. It seemed to me that the purge of Beria has extended to the Secret Police; they are very low in public opinion now.

21.

25X1

22. We saw very few crippled or malnourished people in the USSR. In the war cities of Kiev and Odessa, however, there were many with wooden legs, crutches and canes.
23. Probably the worst thing in the Soviet Union is its toilets. Even in the good hotels and first-class restaurants, they were filthy. All toilets we saw on the collective and state farms were in outhouses and were simple holes in the ground. These "facilities" were used by everyone.

25X1